

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An endoscope system comprising:

a voice input unit which inputs voice in a natural phrase;

a voice and character converting means which recognizes the voice inputted and converts the inputted voice into character data;

comparison data storing means for prestoring, as comparison data with a hierarchal structure, first command character trains for specifying each of a plurality of devices in a storage area corresponding to a first hierarchal tier hierarchy in a memory in a system controller for controlling the plurality of devices, ~~[[and]]~~ second command character trains related to respective functional commands functions and instructions of the plurality of devices in a storage area corresponding to a second hierarchal tier branching from hierarchy subordinate to the first hierarchal tier, and third command character trains related to respective operational commands of the functional commands in a storage area corresponding to a third hierarchal tier branching from the second hierarchal tier hierarchy;

a monitoring unit which monitors the first, ~~[[and]]~~ second and third command character trains that are stored in the comparison data storing means and the character data that is converted by the voice and character converting means;

an executing unit which executes an instruction previously allocated to the combination of the command character trains that correspond to the first, [[and]] second and third command character command trains, upon detecting, in the converted character data, the command character train from the first, [[and]] second and third command character trains for a predetermined time interval in accordance with the hierarchal structure of the preset comparison data; and

a verification requesting means for issuing an audible verification request when the instruction is predetermined to require verification prior to execution.

2. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of devices comprise an electric cautery device.
3. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 2, wherein the command character trains include character trains which designate a plurality of output formats of the electric cautery device.
4. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 3, wherein the character trains which designate the plurality of output formats of the electric cautery device include an output system designating group, an incision mode designating group, an incision output designating group, a clotting mode designating group, and a clotting output designating group.
5. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of devices include a gas insufflator.
6. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 5, wherein the command character trains include character trains which designate a plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator.
7. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 6, wherein the character trains which designate the plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator include an air-supply on/off

designating group, a set pressure designating group, an air-supply mode designating group, and a set fluid amount designating group.

8. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 4, wherein the plurality of devices further include a gas insufflator.

9. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 8, wherein the command character trains include character trains which designate a plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator.

10. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 9, wherein the character trains which designate the plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator include an air-supply on/off designating group, a set pressure designating group, an air-supply mode designating group, and a set fluid amount designating group.

11. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 1, wherein the executing unit executes the instruction allocated to the combination of the command character trains and thereafter displays the executed result of the instruction.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A device control method comprising:

a voice input step of inputting voice in a natural phrase;

a voice and character converting step of recognizing the voice inputted and converting the inputted voice into character data;

a comparison data storing step for prestoring, as comparison data with a hierarchal structure, first command character trains for specifying each of a plurality of devices in a storage area corresponding to a first hierarchal tier hierarchy, ~~[[and]]~~ second command character trains related to respective functional commands ~~functions and instructions~~ of the plurality of devices in a storage area corresponding to a second hierarchal tier branching from hierarchy-subordinate to the first hierarchal tier, and third command character trains related to respective operational commands of the functional commands in a storage area corresponding to a third hierarchal tier branching from the second hierarchal tier hierarchy;

a monitoring step of monitoring the first, ~~[[and]]~~ second and third command character trains that are stored in the comparison data storing step and the character data that is converted by the voice and character converting step;

an executing step of executing an instruction previously allocated to the combination of the command character trains that correspond to the first, ~~[[and]]~~ second and third command character trains, upon detecting, in the converted character data, the command character train from the first, ~~[[and]]~~ second and third command character trains for a predetermined time interval in accordance with the hierarchal structure of the preset comparison data; and

a verification requesting step for issuing an audible verification request when the instruction is predetermined to require verification prior to execution.

14. (Original) The device control method according to Claim 13, further comprising: a display step of displaying an executed result of the instruction after executing the instruction allocated to the combination of the command character trains in the executing step.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) An endoscope system comprising one or a plurality of devices, the endoscope system comprising:

voice input means which inputs voice in a natural phrase;

voice and character converting means which recognizes the voice inputted and converts the inputted voice into character data;

a system controller which controls the plurality of devices;

comparison data storing means for prestoring, as comparison data with a hierarchal structure, first command character trains for specifying each of a plurality of devices in a storage area corresponding to a first hierarchal tier hierarchy in a memory in a system controller for controlling the plurality of devices, ~~[[and]]~~ second command character trains related to respective functional commands ~~functions and instructions~~ of the plurality of devices in a storage area corresponding to a second hierarchal tier branching from hierarchy subordinate to the first hierarchal tier, and third command character trains related to respective operational commands of the functional commands in a storage area corresponding to a third hierarchal tier branching from the second hierarchal tier hierarchy;

monitoring means which monitors the first, ~~[[and]]~~ second and third command character trains that are stored in the comparison data storing means and the character data that is converted by the voice and character converting means; and

executing means which executes an instruction previously allocated to the combination of the command character trains that correspond to the first, [[and]] second and third command character trains, upon detecting, in the converted character data, the command character train from the first, [[and]] second and third command character trains for a predetermined time interval in accordance with the hierarchal structure of the preset comparison data.